

3-14-69

Dear Senator Eastland;

I read in the local newspaper where your committee is considering investigating the Dr. King case. I would like to inform you and the committee that I would cooperate in any such hearing. However, at the time I am going to attempt to get the guilty plea set aside, I know that the odds against having this done are greatly against me. But I think due to the unusual circumstances in the guilty plea it mite be possible. I personally did not shoot Dr. King but I believe I am partly responsible for his death. I will briefly attempt to explain why I entered the guilty plea. At the time Mr. Pery Foreman agreed to take over the defense from Mr. Arthur Hanes we had a verbal agreement that there would be no guilty plea, as I wanted to try the case in court. I had every reason to believe during the first two months Mr. Foreman was on the case there would be a trial, during that period Mr. Foreman had me sign a new contract with him and Mr. Huie giving Mr. Foreman all the money from any of Mr. Huie's money making ventures. (I had sign another contract with Mr. Huie and Mr. Hanes) Shortly after this Mr. Foreman came to visit me and he had a picture for me to look at. This picture was about 8 x 10 in. Mr. Foreman said Mr. Huie had given him the picture and that Mr. Huie had got the picture from someone in the federal government. The picture contain 2 or 3 men followed by two or 3 policemen. Mr. Foreman described one of the men in the picture as an 'anti communist' cuban refugee who was arrested at the time president Kennedy was shot. "The arrest took place in Dallas I was told" I was asked if I would identify the man if he was brought to Memphis. I said no, althoe he did look similar to the person I was involved with. After I wouldn't identify this man, about all I was told was that I would go to the electric chair if I went to trial. I was even told my family wanted me to plead guilty, but I found out this was not so. But I did not plead guilty for the above reasons. I did so because I did not want to go to trial with a lawyer who thought he was going to lose. I believe if you think you will lose you proably will. On the day before I plead guilty I signed another contract with Mr. Foreman. In this one I agreed to give him \$165,000, he agreed to give my brother \$500.00 in the event I wanted to hire another lawyer to reopen the case. Mr. Foreman wrote into the contract that if I embarres him (disagreed) in the court room he could withdraw, the old contract would go into effect and I would be without funds to hire another

attorney. Getting back to Mr. Huie for a minute, while Mr. Hanes was my attorney Mr. Huie asked me through him about public figures and various organizations. I got the impression that he thought their was a conspiracy but he wanted to name the conspirators. And I sometime felt that my attorneys were working for him instead of for me. In closing I would like to say if I can't get the case reopen, their should be an invegestion, as I have signed over \$200,000 to attorneys and not 1/20 of the witnesses have been interview. No one went to Los Angeles or New Orleans where I think much of the evidence lies. Mr. Foreman said in open court that he didn't trust investigators, and the one Mr. Hanes hired never left Memphis. I would also like to say that despite what the papers and book writer's quote me as saying, I have no intention of discussing this case with anyone 'verbaly' until it is closed. If I have anything to say I will say it in court or to lawyers, or in letter form like this letter.

Sincerely, James E. Ray.

COPY:mls

JAMES HIRAY 65477
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To: Senator James O. Eastland
Chairman, Senate Judiciary Committee
Washington, D.C.

400-101-5610

3-14-64

Dear Senator Eastland;

I read in the local newspaper when your committee is considering investigating the Dr. King case. I would like to inform you and the committee that I would cooperate in any such hearings. However, at the time I am going to attempt to get the guilty plea set aside, I know that the odds against being the done are greatly against me, but I think due to the unusual circumstances in the guilty plea, it might be possible. I personally did not shoot Dr. King but I believe I am partly responsible for his death. I will briefly attempt to explain why I entered the guilty plea. At the time Mr. Jerry Foreman agreed to take over the defense from Mr. Arthur Hanes we had a verbal agreement that there would be no guilty plea as I wanted to try the case in court. I had every reason to believe during that first two weeks Mr. Foreman was on the case that there would be a trial, during that period Mr. Foreman had me sign a new contract with him and Mr. Huie giving Mr. Foreman all the money from any of Mr. Huie's money making ventures, (I had sign another contract with Mr. Huie and Mr. Hanes) Shortly after this Mr. Foreman came to visit me and he had a picture for me to look at. This picture was about 8x10 in. Mr. Foreman said Mr. Huie had given him the picture and that Mr. Huie had got the picture from someone in the federal government. The picture contained 2 or 3 images followed by two or 3 pictures. Mr. Foreman described one of the men in the picture as an "anti communist" Cuban refugee who was arrested at the time president Kennedy was shot. "The arrest took place in Dallas I was told" I was

to Memphis, I said no, unless he did look similar to the person I was involved with. After I wouldn't identify this man, about all I was told was that I would go to the electric chair if I went to trial, I was even told my family wanted me to plead guilty, but I found out this was not so.

But I did not plead guilty for the above reasons, I did so because I did not want to go to trial with a lawyer who thought he was going to lose, I believe if you think you will lose you probably will, on the day before I plead guilty

I signed another contract with Mr. Thomas, in this one I agreed to give him \$6000, he agreed to give my brother \$500.00 and then I wanted to hire another lawyer to reopen the case. Mr. Thomas went into the contract that if I remembered (DISCREPANT) in the court room he could withdraw, the old contract would go into effect and I would be without funds to hire another attorney. Subsequent to

Mr. Hines for a minute, while Mr. Hines was my attorney Mr. Hines asked me through his about public figures and various organizations I got the impression that he thought there was a conspiracy but he wanted to know the cooperation, and I sometimes felt that my attorney was working for him instead of for me.

In closing I would like to say if I can't get the case reopened I should be an investigator, I've signed over \$200,000 to attorney and out 100 of the witnesses have been interviewed, the one next to the couch on the other side when I think most of the evidence was. Mr. Thomas said in open court that he didn't trust investigators, and the one Mr. Hines hired never left Memphis.

I would also like to say that despite what the paper and back writer quote me as saying, I have no intention of discussing this case with anyone 'whenever' until it is closed.

If I hear anything, I will say it in court or to Congress, or in letters from like this letter.